

ON PAGE **AT**

NEW YORK TIMES

30 March 1987

Marine Gave Conflicting Stories Of Soviet Intrigue, Records Show

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 29 — Sgt. Clayton J. Lonetree, a Marine Corps guard accused of espionage, told investigators conflicting stories about how he became entangled with a Soviet agent in Moscow, according to records of his interrogation.

In three separate interviews late last year, Sergeant Lonetree described how his romantic involvement with a Soviet woman employed at the United States Embassy in Moscow evolved into an espionage relationship with her purported uncle, a man calling himself Sasha.

Declassified versions of 23 typed pages of agents' memorandums about Sergeant Lonetree's statements were made available by William M. Kunstler, one of Sergeant Lonetree's civilian defense lawyers, who said his client was not guilty of espionage or any of the other charges against him. Mr. Kunstler said the bizarre nature of the accounts his client gave investigators showed they were "fantasy" or the result of coercion by the investigators.

According to Mr. Kunstler, one of the investigators admitted at a preliminary proceeding that he had urged Sergeant Lonetree "to just tell us something — tell us a lie."

"Here's a kid in the Marines who's never been out of the U.S.," said Mr. Kunstler. "Suddenly he's in Moscow and Vienna and I think he created a fantasy world. I don't even know if there was a Sasha."

Sergeant Lonetree's statements, if true, do provide a picture of how a marine fascinated by espionage books and European Communism could be seduced by a young woman and initiated in espionage tactics in Moscow and Vienna. The sergeant also described how "Sasha" pressed him for the names of alcoholics, homosexuals, drug users, or others in any way susceptible to recruitment in the embassies where he worked.

Three Interviews With Agents

The investigators prepared memorandums on their three interviews with Sergeant Lonetree, which began after he signed a form waiving his rights to a lawyer and ended when he asked for a lawyer. The memorandums contain mostly paraphrases of Sergeant Lonetree's remarks, with some direct quotations, and each was signed by the suspect. The investigators were agents of the Naval Investigative Service; the Marine Corps is part of the Department of the Navy,

According to the memorandums, Sergeant Lonetree said he turned himself in last December because he could not stand the anxiety over what he had

done and over Soviet agents' future plans for him. He said had got in "over his head and could not get out."

He gave differing explanations for his activities. He alluded to "intrigue" at several points but later said he feared blackmail for signing a piece of paper saying "I will always be a friend of the Soviet Union."

At still another moment, Sergeant Lonetree, who has Navajo and Winnebago Indian heritage, said he gave secret information to a Soviet agent because "of what the White man did to the Indian," adding, "What I did was nothing compared what the U.S. Government did to the American Indian 100 years ago."

'Great Love for My Country'

Immediately after that sentence in the typed account of his interview, Sergeant Lonetree wrote by hand, "But I still have a great love for my country."

At no time in the interviews did Sergeant Lonetree mention the most serious espionage allegation against him: that he allowed Soviet agents to enter the American Embassy in Moscow. Mr. Kunstler denied that allegation, and he and others familiar with the case said it was based on a statement by another Marine guard, Cpl. Arnold Bracy. According to Mr. Kunstler, Corporal Bracy has since recanted that account, saying it was invented by investigators eager to strengthen their case against Sergeant Lonetree.

"They're using a story, a false story, to make their case," Mr. Kunstler said. He said the classified sections of the documents related to such things as American intelligence gathering.

Mr. Kunstler said his client probably did have a love affair with Violetta Seina, a 26-year-old Soviet woman employed by the American embassy who told the sergeant she was a Ukrainian

Jew. But Mr. Kunstler said the other admissions would be proved to be untrue.

Mr. Kunstler said he was skeptical that his client had made statements about his American Indian heritage as an espionage motive. Mr. Kunstler said nothing in his client's family background suggested any such animosity, and he noted that in a recent conversation, the Marine recognized none of the leading figures in the Native American civil rights movement.

According to Mr. Kunstler, the tone and conflicting nature of the interview prompted the Marine Corps to order Sergeant Lonetree to undergo a psychiatric examination.

The sergeant is now awaiting a decision over whether he will be court-martialed, and the next hearing in his case will be held April 15. Mr. Kunstler said he would protest what he termed a barrage of prejudicial publicity.

The case against Sergeant Lonetree began when he turned himself in on Dec. 14 in Vienna, where he had been routinely transferred after his Moscow duty. He told investigators: "I really could not continue with the worry and anxiety that I was going through. This was not my life style." He was detained Dec. 24 and immediately signed a form waiving his right to a lawyer. After being flown to London, he began three days of interrogation.

As the sessions went on, Sergeant Lonetree made increasingly damaging admissions, according to the documents. In the third interview, Sergeant Lonetree said he collected classified documents from the Vienna embassy that were intended for destruction, hid them in a drain pipe at the embassy, and gave them to "Sasha" in November 1986. Some of the documents at issue were classified secret and related to negotiations between the Soviet Union, the United States and European countries about reducing conventional forces in Europe, according to the documents.

Sergeant Lonetree then denied taking the secret papers, prompting the investigators to ask again:

"Did you, in fact, steal and give those documents to Sasha?"

He responded: "Yes, I did, it is the truth. I am so ashamed. I have never been more afraid for what I have done."

Sergeant Lonetree acknowledged receiving a total of \$3,500 from Sasha but said the money was not a motivation. He said he spent the cash on an expensive silk tie for Sasha and a \$1,000 dress for Ms. Seina. Some of the money also went for beers and meals for his fellow marines in Vienna, he said.

According to the documents, Sergeant Lonetree said he first met Ms. Seina by chance at a subway stop in Moscow in September 1985. A month later, another chance meeting at the same station led to an extended conversation, he said.

Sergeant Lonetree said he saw her again in November at a Marine Corps ball at the embassy that was also attended by several other Soviet employees. He also said he applied for an extension of his tour of duty in Moscow "because of my fondness for Violetta."

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In some of his meetings with her, Sergeant Lonetree said he used "counter-surveillance" techniques such as changing clothing and routes to avoid pursuit by the K.G.B., the Soviet intelligence service. He said he learned these by reading books by John Barron, the American author who has written extensive nonfiction works about the K.G.B. and espionage.

Eventually, Ms. Seina introduced him to her uncle Sasha, the sergeant said, and they talked about life in the United States and the Soviet Union. At a second meeting, Sasha asked him to help the "Soviet people" and Ms. Seina. Sasha began asking a series of questions on a list and said he had a friend

who was a K.G.B. general, Sergeant Lonetree recalled.

At a third meeting, he was shown photographs of officials of the American Embassy in Moscow and asked to identify them. In February 1986, the sergeant said Sasha asked him to put a electronic listening device in the American Ambassador's office, but said he did not do so.

In March 1986, he was transferred to Vienna, where he said he had several meetings with Sasha. Sasha was identified in the Marine Corps complaint against Sergeant Lonetree as Aleksel G. Yefimov.

Later in 1986, Sergeant Lonetree said he began planning a trip to the Soviet Union. He said Sasha encouraged this because his friend, the K.G.B. general, was eager to meet the marine. Sergeant Lonetree said he thought the trip would be used for training in espionage.

"I was never directly threatened by Sasha," he said, according to the documents. "However, on one occasion on 27 November 1986, I asked Sasha if he would blackmail me if I did not cooperate any more. He made me understand that I was his friend and he wanted to continue that friendship. These words were said to me in such terms that I realize I must at that point continue."

Later on, he said he tried to enlist a woman who was a friend of his in a scheme to entrap Sasha by taking pictures of him in a compromising situation. But the woman, he said, did not show up for the meeting.

In his final interview, Sergeant Lonetree said that he had told the truth about his activities and that he had given a complete account of his involvement with Sasha. Just before asking for a lawyer, he said he became involved with the K.G.B. "due to intrigue and his interest in intelligence matters," according to paraphrased notes taken by the investigators.